CHECKLIST FOR INDUCTION AND ONBOARDING OF NEW COORDINATION GROUP MEMBERS

from the Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localization in Humanitarian Coordination, 2022 p.64

Cluster coordinators should put in place induction sessions for any new member of a coordination group, whether local, national, or international. Sessions should aim to ensure mutual responsibilities and accountabilities are agreed and understood, and appropriate support is provided to new members during initial stages of their participation.

Below is a checklist of key elements for induction and onboarding of new members:

1. Introduce the member to the cluster approach

- Explain what clusters are, and the implications of being a member. Draw on existing resources such as the *Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations (*https://educationcluster.app.box.com/ s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01/file/770587330455*)*. Please note that the guide is available in 11 languages, available at: https://www.educationcluster.net/localization.
- Explain leadership structures within clusters (e.g. Cluster Lead Agencies, Strategic Advisory Groups, etc), selection criteria, and opportunities for the new local/ national member to become involved in leadership.

2. Explain the limitations and challenges of an IASC coordination structure to help manage expectations

Coordinators should present the challenges that are applicable for their context. For example, these may include:

- Cluster lead agencies often lack impartiality
- There may be a limited representation of diverse local and national actors
- Cluster coordination is a labour intensive and requires significant time and resources to be effective
- There are insufficient mechanisms in place for the promotion of accountability to affected populations
- Enquire whether the new member is part of other national or sub-national coordination structures, to understand how the two might work together.

3. Explain meeting protocols, group dynamics and acronyms.

- Share the cluster Terms of Reference (ToR) and talk about who the other members are; what happens during coordination meetings; when and where they are held; how agendas are set, what is expected of members, etc. Coordination leads should ask local/national actors the best way for them to access information and communicate; WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook or Zoom may be more suitable than slow or hard-to-navigate websites, for example. Ask the new member about potential security conditions or other local circumstances that may affect their ability to participate in meetings (e.g. night time curfews, cultural acceptability of women's mobility after certain times and childcare-related constraints).
- Outline the different ways in which organizations can engage, and the benefits of participation to both the individual actor, as well as the coordination group as a whole.
- For a list of key coordination acronyms, see page 6 of *Humanitarian coordination and the cluster approach: a quick guide for local and national organizations* (https:// educationcluster.app.box.com/s/3xt0yu68yiryg2k2b2k6t0up6xyipr01/file/770587330455).

4. Explain what being a cluster member involves: mutual accountabilities and responsibilities

There are no fixed membership criteria or application processes to join a cluster. However, they may exist at the country-level, in which case these should be made available to the new member.

These are the factors new members should consider:

a) **Time investment for sustained engagement**: for example, ability to attend regular meetings, input to strategy development, share relevant and timely information at meetings and in tools like the 4Ws, offer technical expertise when needed
b) **Relevance of work**: the new member is an organisation which implements programs relevant to the sector;

c) **Minimum commitments**: the new member organization must
- Uphold the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence
- Commit to cluster-specific guidance and minimum standards, and mainstream protection in all programs, including respect for principles of non-discrimination and "do no harm"
- Be ready to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations and the <u>Six Core Principles Relating to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/accountability-and-inclusion/translators-without-borders-twb-support-iasc-results-group</u>)

5. Provide guidance that is tailored to a new member's needs or area of work, and make key documents and information available in relevant local and national languages.

- Endeavour to minimize and explain the use of jargon or technical language, and establish shared definitions and understandings of shared goals. Consider making use of or developing a glossary of topic-specific terms (See e.g. Translators without Borders' glossary at https://translatorswithoutborders.org/twb-glossaries/ to ensure communication with local/national actors is accurate)
- Explain that cluster meetings and documents are usually in the main official language of a country or in international languages like English and French. The minimum commitments for cluster coordination state that clusters should provide interpretation in an appropriate language (including sign language) so all cluster partners can participate, including local organizations.

6. Give examples of what the added value of being a cluster member is:

- Access to guidance and national repository of key documents
- Ability to raise concerns and influence response strategies
- Working in a complementary way with other NGOs
- Access to peer-analysis of local vulnerabilities, risks and capacities to prioritize needs
- Discuss quality issues and ways forward
- Integration of preparedness efforts into a larger inter-sector preparedness plan
- Increased chances to address your funding gaps
- Guidance to improve protection and gender in your response
- Guidance to support complaints feedback mechanisms to improve your accountability to affected population

7. Invite existing members to participate in induction briefings.

- For example, members who are local/national actors can present on the local context and local coordination mechanisms. Existing members may also wish to share their perspective on the benefits and challenges of participating in coordination mechanisms. 67
- Moreover, the Cluster's Information Management Officer should arrange an induction on the 4W database and reporting to the reporting focal points of new members.

8. Inform the new members who they can turn to for further information, support, to give feedback or to make a complaint about the coordination group.

- Ensure support structures are in place and accessible, including an anonymous way to register concerns, in a language and format the member is comfortable using. Such support structures might include mentoring schemes where existing members, or Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) members, are available to answer questions and offer support.
- Let new members know about plans and procedures for internal reviews where they can give feedback on the way the cluster operates, for example: https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/3.-CP-AoR-Principles-of- Partnership-Cluster-Review.pdf.

Download the *Inter-Agency Toolkit on Localization in Humanitarian Coordination* here:
https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/inter-agency-toolkit-on-localisation-in-humanitarian-coordination/